

ERIK LARSEN TODD McFARLANE

image

263

DIGITAL
EDITION

SPAWN[®]

I'M
HUMAN
AGAIN?!





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PREVIOUSLY IN SPAWN

The two mightiest forces in the universe, God and Satan, clash in Hell in a battle for the souls of Wanda and her unborn child. As the fight rages on, Spawn uses their feud as a distraction to secure Wanda and the unborn child. Wanda then fuses the fetus with Al to give it life. Spawn makes a bargain with Satan offering up the Costume in exchange for Wanda's eternal salvation with God. After the deal is made and a final goodbye, Wanda makes her way to Heaven. Al departs, traveling towards the tunnel entrance to Earth, but close on his tail are Satan's minions who've been sent to kill him. Once Al reaches the tunnel entrance, the Costume acts as a bomb and blows up Satan. Al uses a sliver of what was left of his Costume to create a sword which he uses to lock out the influence of both Heaven and Hell to Earth. In the final scene, Wanda, now in Heaven, looks down on Al one last time.



HE'S BACK.

SOMEHOW AL SIMMONS MADE IT. THOUGH HE HAD MOMENTS OF DOUBT, HE HAS WALKED THROUGH TOTAL DARKNESS OUTSIDE HELL'S 'TUNNEL.' HAD IT BEEN A DAY? A WEEK? HE'D LOST ALL TRACK OF TIME.

WHAT HE DOES KNOW IS HE SEALED THE PORTAL THAT BOTH HEAVEN AND HELL HAD USED TO SEND THEIR SERVANTS ONTO EARTH. FOR NOW, NO MORE AGENTS FROM GOD OR SATAN WILL BE ALLOWED BACK. BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY, HE HAS A NEW MISSION, GIVEN TO HIM AS A LAST REQUEST FROM THE ONLY WOMAN HE HAD EVER LOVED.

"PROTECT THEM. SAVE THEM. SAVE EVERYONE. AND BECOME THE HERO THEY NEED." THOSE WERE THE WORDS WANDA, HIS FORMER WIFE, SPOKE BEFORE LEAVING HIM FOREVER. AND NOW THAT HE'S BACK-- HE PLANS TO LIVE THE REST OF HIS LIFE HONORING HER REQUEST.

THOUGH HE'LL HAVE TO DO IT WITHOUT THE AID OF HIS SPAWN COSTUME.



HE SURRENDERED HIS SYMBIOTIC ARMOR TO SATAN IN RETURN FOR WANDA'S SOUL GETTING SAFE PASSAGE TO HEAVEN.

BUT BEFORE HANDING HIS LIVING SUIT TO SATAN... HE TOOK A SMALL PIECE OF IT FOR HIMSELF, BEFORE TURNING THE REST OF THE COSTUME INTO A NUCLEAR BOMB.*

*See last issue -- Todd



WHATEVER HIS PLANS NOW, AL SIMMONS UNDERSTANDS THE RULES HAVE CHANGED.



BUT HE'S DETERMINED MORE THAN EVER TO BECOME A TRUE HERO.





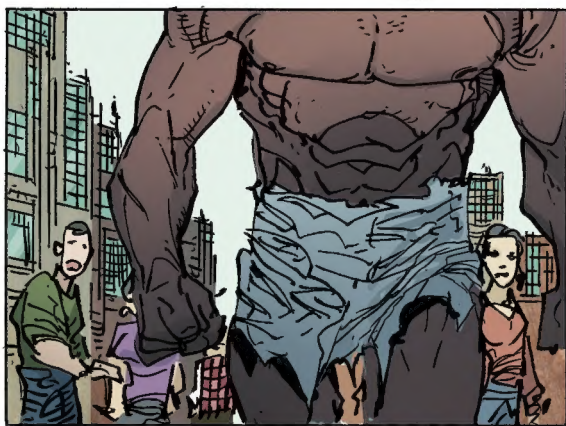
AND TO NEVER BE
'ABSENT' FROM
MANKIND'S NEEDS
AGAIN. THAT'S HOW HIS
ENEMIES WERE ABLE TO
KILL WANDA-- BECAUSE
HE WASN'T THERE.
HE'D LEFT EARTH AND
CREATED A VACUUM
FOR EVIL TO THRIVE.*

HE WON'T MAKE
THAT MISTAKE AGAIN.



THERE HE IS.
THAT'S THE GUY
I WAS TALKING
ABOUT.

I'LL
TAKE IT
FROM
HERE.



EXCUSE ME,
SIR. I NEED TO
ASK YOU A FEW
THINGS.



LOOK,
OFFICER, I'M
SORRY ABOUT
HOW I LOOK,
BUT...

I NEED
TO SEE
SOME
I.D.

*He left earth in Issues 185 thru 250 -- Todd









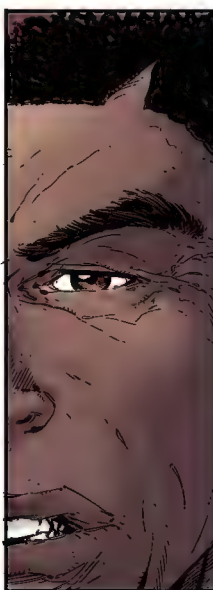
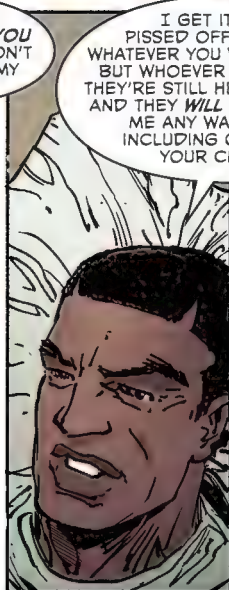
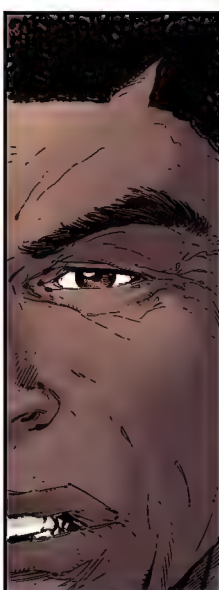
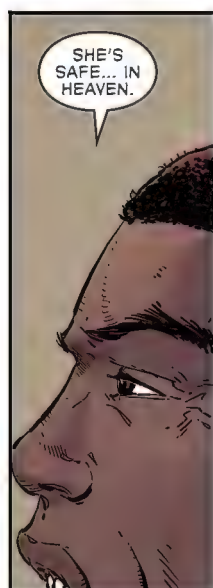


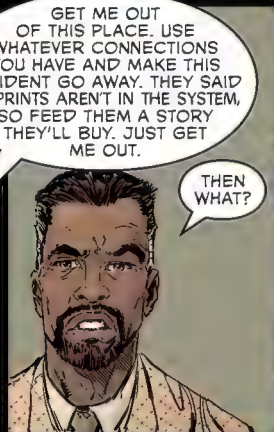
IT TAKES 10 HOURS BUT THE AUTHORITIES TRACK TERRY DOWN. THEY ESCORT HIM TO AL'S HOSPITAL ROOM, HOPING THAT A PRIVATE CONVERSATION MAY LEAD TO THE INFORMATION THE POLICE SEEK.

YOU'VE GOT SOME NERVE, AL, DRAGGING ME INTO THIS SHIT.

WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM ME?







THEN WHAT?



IT DOESN'T TAKE LONG. THE AGENCY TERRY CURRENTLY WORKS FOR HAS HIDDEN INFLUENCE IN EVERY CORNER OF THE GLOBE. GETTING A HOSPITAL TO RELEASE SOMEONE WHO APPEARS TO BE 'NORMAL' IS RATHER ROUTINE.

TERRY, I HAVEN'T HAD A CHANCE TO ASK YET... HOW ARE YOUR KIDS DOING?

I... THEY... SEEM TO BE OKAY. BUT I KNOW THEY'RE TRYING TO BE BRAVE. HIDING THE HOLE THAT IS THERE WITHOUT WANDA. THE TWINS SEEM TO BE DEALING WITH IT BETTER THAN CYAN.

IT'S BEEN TOUGH ON HER?

SHE'S IN DRUG REHAB. DOESN'T SEEM TO BE MAKING MUCH PROGRESS.

I'M SORRY TO HEAR THAT.

IF YOU CAN HELP HER, HELP HER IN ANY WAY, I'D...

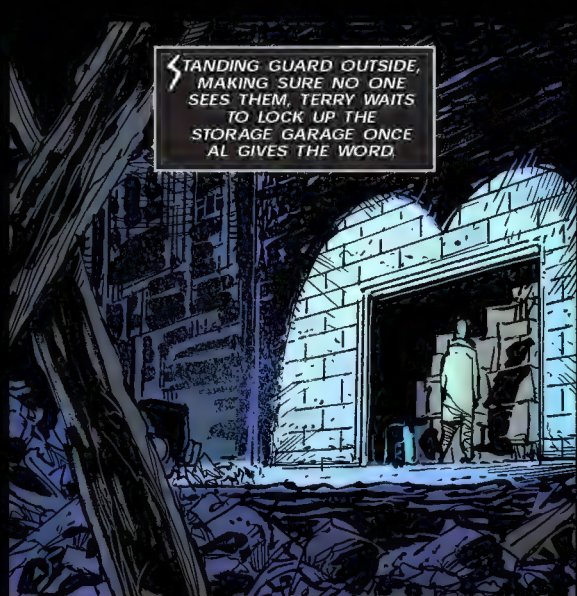
CLAK

THERE! FINALLY.

I SHOULD HAVE TOLD YOU ABOUT THIS YEARS AGO.

WHAT'S HERE?

EVERYTHING WANDA COULDN'T BEAR TO THROW AWAY AFTER YOU DIED. AFTER YOUR FUNERAL SHE HAD ME MOVE A BUNCH OF STUFF THAT, I'VE ALWAYS ASSUMED MEANT SOMETHING TO HER. DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT'S INSIDE THE BOXES AND CRATES.





" PLUS I HAVE
A SECURED PHONE
AND SOME MONEY
TO GET YOU BY FOR
NOW. BUT WHAT
I NEED TO KNOW
IS HOW CAPABLE
YOU ARE. IF YOUR
ENEMIES THINK
YOU'VE WEAKENED
WHAT'S TO STOP
THEM FROM DOING
ANYTHING THEY
WANT? "

YOU THE
NEW GUY LIVING
IN OLD MAN
JACKSON'S
APARTMENT?

FOR
THE TIME
BEING.

HE WAS
KINDA WEIRD.
THEY SAID HE
KILLED HIMSELF.
I THINK HIS PLACE
IS HAUNTED NOW.
JUST THOUGHT
YOU SHOULD
KNOW.

OKAY. THANKS,
I GUESS.

MY NAME'S
TOMMY. I'M
SEVEN. YOU
WANT ME TO
COME IN?

NOT
RIGHT NOW.
MAYBE ANOTHER
TIME.

OKAY.
I'LL COME
BACK
TOMORROW.


KNOCK
KNOCK

YES?
CAN I
HELP
YOU?

breep
breep

HELLO?

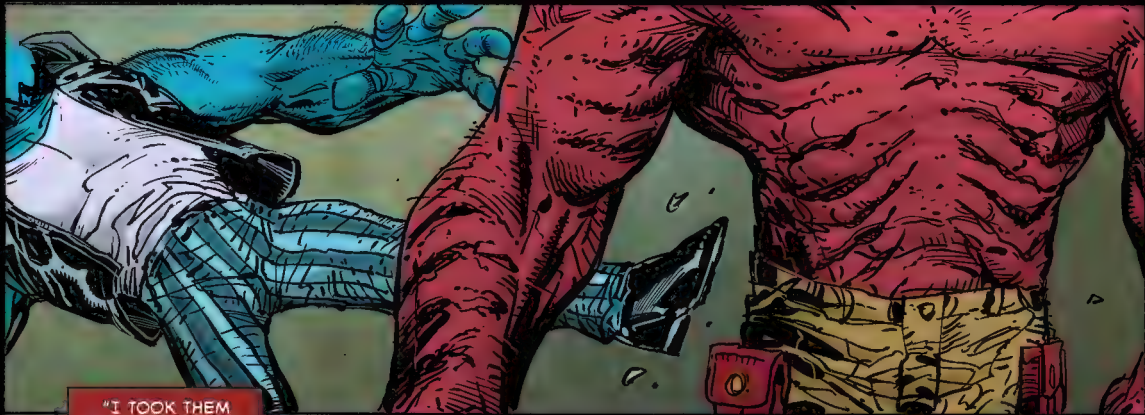
HEY
TERRY. YEAH
THE PLACE IS
FINE, THOUGH
I DIDN'T SLEEP
MUCH LAST
NIGHT. IT WAS
LIKE...



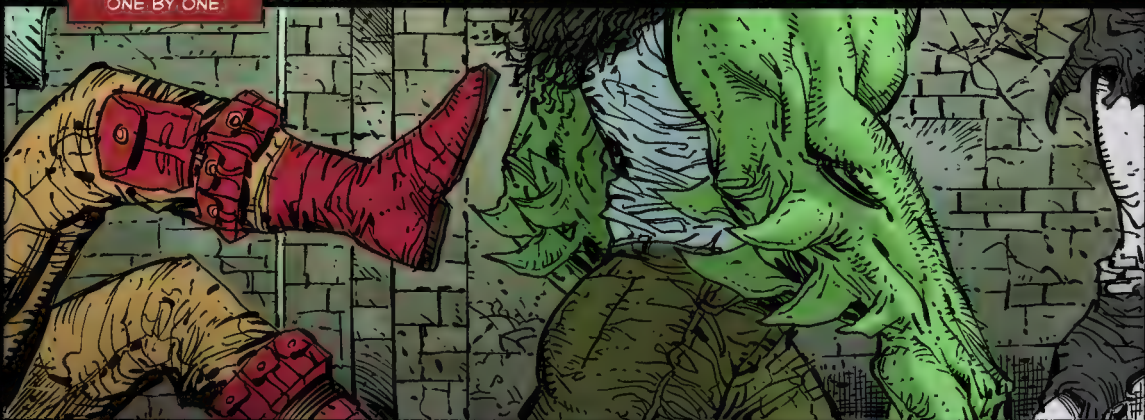
"I DON'T KNOW
HOW TO EXPLAIN IT,
BUT I HAD SOME
BIZARRE DREAM THE
CITY WAS GETTING
OVERRUN BY A
BUNCH OF MESSED
UP BAD GUYS"

"I KEPT WAKING UP,
BUT EVERY TIME I
SHUT MY EYES AGAIN
I KEPT GOING BACK TO
THE SAME DREAM."

"AND GUESS WHAT
HAPPENED?"



"I TOOK THEM
OUT. ALL OF THEM.
ONE BY ONE."

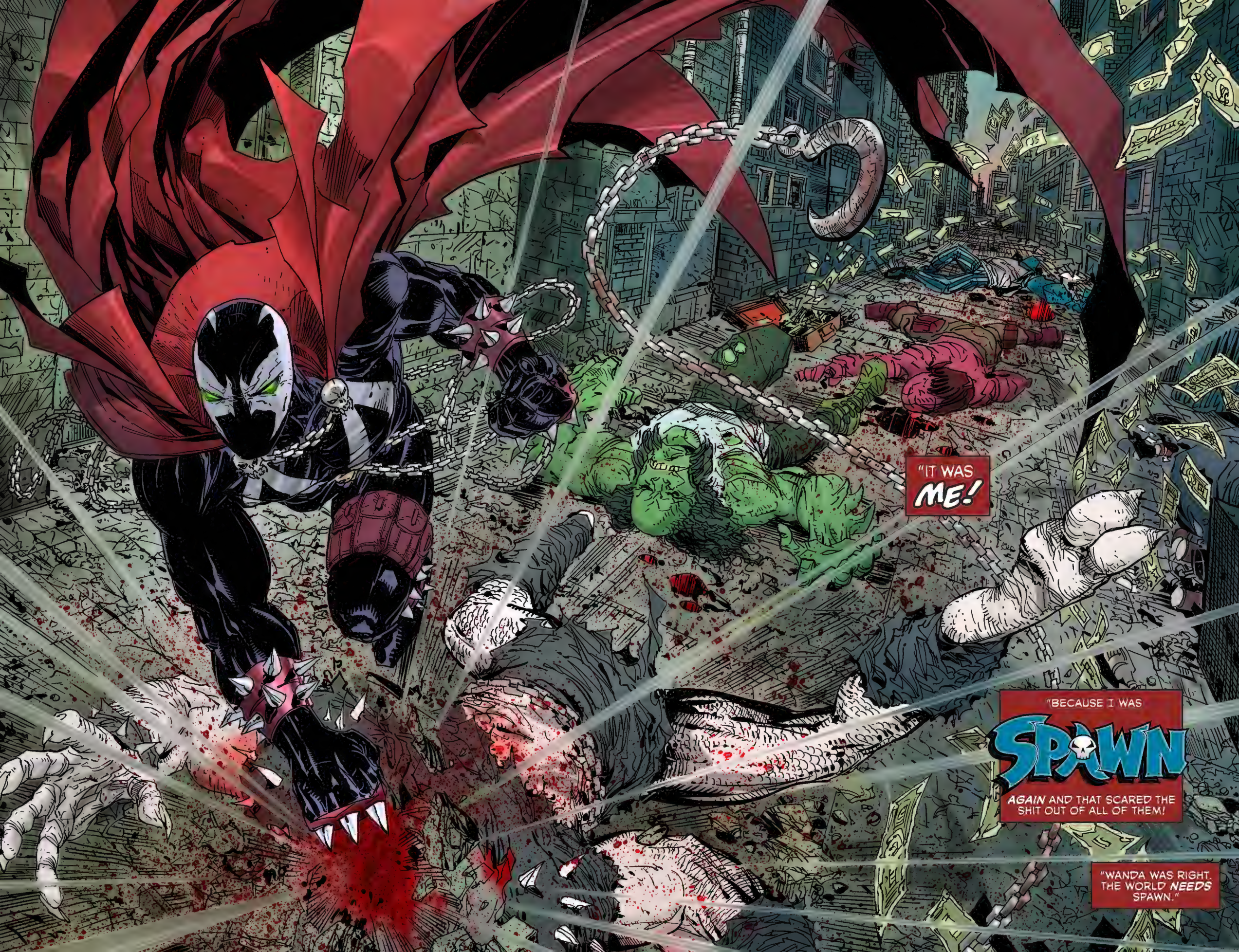


"THEY NEVER KNEW
WHAT HIT THEM."



"BY THE TIME THEY
REALIZED I WAS EVEN
THERE, IT WAS TOO LATE.
BUT THE THING I CAN'T
GET OUT OF MY MIND IS
THE LOOK IN THEIR EYES.
THEY WERE TERRIFIED.
I SWEAR I COULD
FEEL THEIR FEAR."

"AND YOU KNOW WHAT
SCARED THEM?"



"IT WAS
ME!"

"BECAUSE I WAS
SPAWN
AGAIN AND THAT SCARED THE
SHIT OUT OF ALL OF THEM!"

"WANDA WAS RIGHT.
THE WORLD NEEDS
SPAWN."



I ALREADY HAD PLANS WHAT I WAS GOING TO DO TO MY ENEMIES WHEN I RETURNED.* BUT LAST NIGHT CONFIRMED ALL OF IT. SO WHETHER I HAVE POWERS OR NOT, I'M NOT GOING TO LET THE EVIL THAT'S LOCKED HERE ALREADY HAVE ITS WAY.

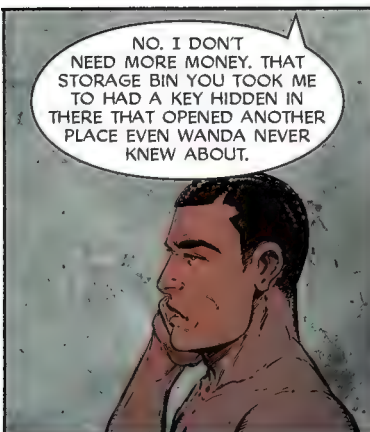
AND I MAY NEED YOUR HELP FROM TIME TO TIME, TERRY.

BUT I NEED TO KEEP YOU OUT OF TROUBLE. I CAN'T COMPROMISE YOU WITH YOUR BOSSES.

*See issue #250 - Todd



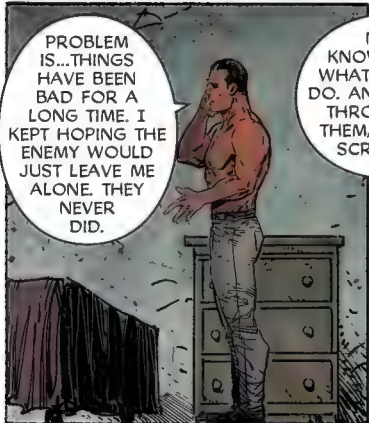
WHAT'S THAT?



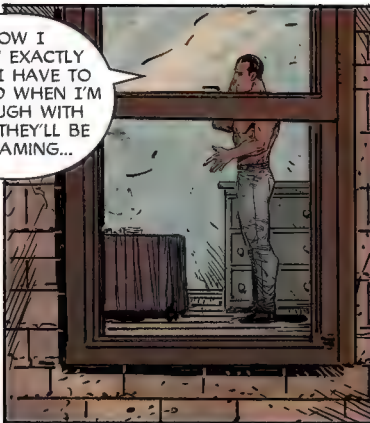
NO. I DON'T NEED MORE MONEY. THAT STORAGE BIN YOU TOOK ME TO HAD A KEY HIDDEN IN THERE THAT OPENED ANOTHER PLACE EVEN WANDA NEVER KNEW ABOUT.



I HID THINGS THERE--AWAY FROM HER--IN CASE THINGS GOT BAD.



PROBLEM IS...THINGS HAVE BEEN BAD FOR A LONG TIME. I KEPT HOPING THE ENEMY WOULD JUST LEAVE ME ALONE. THEY NEVER DID.



NOW I KNOW EXACTLY WHAT I HAVE TO DO. AND WHEN I'M THROUGH WITH THEM, THEY'LL BE SCREAMING...



"SPAWN, LEAVE US ALONE!"



SPAWN WHEREVER YOU ARE.

The ENTIRE *Spawn* comic library and *Spawn Origins Collection* Volumes 1 – 20 is now available in digital format from ComiXology, iBooks, Google Play, and imagecomics.com. Fans can immerse themselves with 23 years and 250+ issues of *Spawn* with the simple swipe of a fingertip. *Spawn* is one of the world's best-selling and longest-running independent monthly comic books, know for it's hyper-detailed art from its creator, **Todd McFarlane**. Now you can read the entire series wherever you are.

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SPAWNING GROUND

Hello all!

Before I turn it over to the Toddfather himself, I wanted to lead with a few things going on here at Todd McFarlane Productions.

First off, if you aren't following Todd on Facebook you are missing out! Todd has been doing a lot of cool LIVE videos that include things like drawing lessons, behind the scenes looks, announcements and his favorite thing, GIVEAWAYS! And, did you hear that Super-Fan Builds (on the Awe Me YouTube Channel) is going to be building a one-of-a-kind custom Spawn build for the ULTIMATE Spawn super-fan?! Make sure to follow Todd on Facebook for more Super-Fan Builds news and the big reveal!

Secondly, if you haven't see what's coming just in time for San Diego Comic-Con, *Spawn Kills Everyone* will be hitting shelves on Wednesday, July 20th. If the cover gives any clue to how awesome it will be, it's going to rock some socks off!

For this Spawning Ground, Todd wanted to share some reflections about the character of Wanda Blake now that she's officially gone. So without further ado, the Toddfather:

In *Spawn* issue one, I laid down the groundwork for the entire motivation as to WHY the Al Simmons character existed and he existed because of the love of his WIFE. This is something I know intimately and it's no coincidence that the Wanda character has the same first name as MY wife.

What changed along the way is that from the moment Al came back in issue one, the fantasy of what he thought his world and his wife was about, wasn't really true. So, not only has he been struggling against the enemy, but he's been struggling against dealing with the reality he will NEVER get his wife back. And for 250 plus issues, in the back of his mind, there was STILL that bit of wishful thinking that MAYBE somehow things

could go back the way they used to be.

But now, with issue #263, the driving force for him to be around is OFFICIALLY dead.

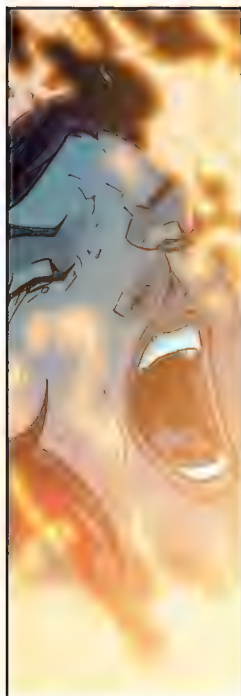
I know other comics like to resurrect people and I've never been a fan of that. So as far as I'm concerned, the character of Wanda Blake... the character who has been there since issue ONE, is FOREVER GONE.

What WON'T leave, is the Al Simmons/Spawn character. He's going to be living his life based on what his ex-wife told him with her last farewell... 'it's time to be a hero'!

For 260 issues, he has been sort of selfish in terms of how and why he



Wanda, *Spawn* issue #3



Wanda's untimely death, Spawn Resurrection.



Spawn rescues Wanda from Hell, Spawn issue #260

uses his powers. I want to move forward and turn that around. I want the Spawn character to have a reason to BE the classic, true superhero, and unfortunately it took something as impactful as his wife dying, to jolt him. From here on, his job will be to protect the world. Not

in the traditional classic American superhero fashion, but in a way that he knows the world NEEDS him and HE needs to step up. He needs to be the hero Wanda said that he SHOULD have been since issue one.

We are moving into uncharted territory.

Al is going to EMBRACE being Spawn instead of FIGHTING it... and he owes it all to his wife.

TODD



Wanda watching over Al from Heaven, Spawn issue #262.

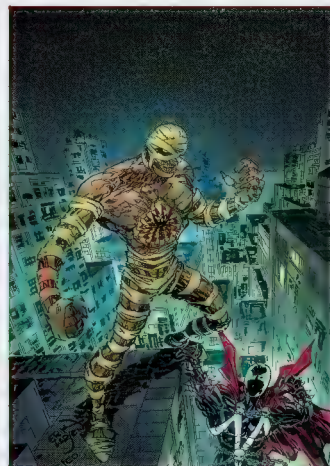
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NEXT ISSUE

Spawn begins to test his limitations as a human.

THE MOST COMPLICATED MACHINE EVER MADE
IS NOT FINISHED MAKING... ITSELF

MECHANISM™

BY RAFFAELE IENCO



RAFF
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